

University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

---

University of Montana News Releases, 1928,  
1956-present

University Relations

---

6-5-1996

### Guest opinion on Richard Bowers by George M. Dennison, President, The University of Montana

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/newsreleases>

## Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

---

#### Recommended Citation

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "Guest opinion on Richard Bowers by George M. Dennison, President, The University of Montana" (1996). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 14192.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/newsreleases/14192>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Relations at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).



Office of the President  
The University of Montana  
Missoula, Montana 59812-1291

Phone: (406) 243-2311  
FAX: (406) 243-2797

June 5, 1996

Guest opinion on Richard Bowers

by George M. Dennison  
President, The University of Montana

*"The essence of greatness is the perception that virtue is enough." —Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

The University of Montana and the citizens of Montana lost a good friend and benefactor with the recent passing of Richard C. Bowers, the University's 13th president.

Although nearly 15 years have passed since Bowers ended his seven-year tenure as president, his memory looms large on the campus he loved. The Bowers legacy exists throughout the University, both in such physical landmarks as the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Building and in the spirit of community, outreach and service that continues to inform and enrich our efforts.

As president from July 1974 through June 1981, Bowers helped set the course for the University's future success, launching initiatives that have continued and expanded under his successors. A man of great integrity, honesty and compassion, he ably led the University through a very difficult period. In the late 1970s, a shift in the state's formula for funding the Montana University System forced deep cuts in the University's budget and personnel. Faced with a 12- to 15-percent reduction in faculty and staff in one year, Bowers made the hard choices while keeping the human toll uppermost in mind. In a no-win situation, he sought to protect as much as possible.

The Bowers years brought significant growth to University facilities, including such new



construction as the Pharmacy/Psychology Building, the top two floors of the Mansfield Library and the addition to the Law Building.

One of his greatest accomplishments came near the end of his tenure when he secured state funding for the University's long-sought Performing Arts and Radio/Television Building. Completed in early 1985, the project brought state-of-the-art theater and broadcast facilities to the citizens of western Montana.

The sense of partnership between campus and community, so prevalent today, traces its roots to the Bowers presidency. The University of Montana Excellence Fund, which fuels vital University programs through community contributions, provides a shining example of that legacy.

Another Bowers initiative still thriving today involves statewide outreach through community visitation. He worked tirelessly to strengthen and re-establish the University's ties to communities and citizens throughout Montana, traveling widely across the state to meet with community groups and teach classes in local high schools.

Bowers' commitment to the University, to higher education and to the people of Montana continues to inspire those who knew him and those who have been touched by his accomplishments.

Shortly before he left the University, he noted that "the best investment society can make is the education of its citizens." As a responsible and caring steward for that investment, Bowers left the University, community and state much richer for his contributions.

Those who wish to contribute to the University in his memory will do well to remember his great pride and sense of accomplishment in securing the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center. It stands as a lasting tribute to the commitment and accomplishments of President Richard Bowers.

###

Guest editorial: Missoulain, Lake County Leader